

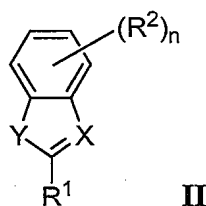
***Amendments to the Claims:***

Please cancel claims 1-11 and 36 without prejudice.

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the above-captioned application.

Claims 1-31. (Canceled)

32. (Currently amended): A method of synthesizing a chemical compound comprising a cyclic ring having the structure **II**



~~where  $R^1$  and  $R^2$  are independently hydrogen, alkyl, aryl, or halogen;~~

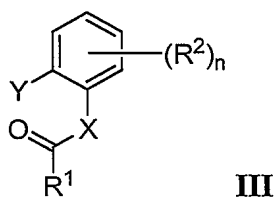
where  $R^1$  is alkyl or aryl;

where each  $R^2$  is independently hydrogen, alkyl, aryl, or halogen;

where n is 1 to 4; and

~~where X and Y are independently N or O~~where X is N and Y is O, comprising:

reacting an acyclic compound having the structure **III** with an acid in a hydrocarbon solvent;



where  $R^1$  and  $R^2$  are independently hydrogen, alkyl, aryl, or halogen;

where  $n$  is 1 to 4; and

where  $X$  and  $Y$  are independently N or O;

heating the reaction.

33. (Original): The method of claim 32, wherein the acid is an organic acid.

34. (Original): The method of claim 32, wherein the acid is *p*-TsOH.

35. (Original): The method of claim 32, wherein the solvent is an organic solvent.

36. (Canceled)

37. (Original): The method of claim 32, wherein heating the reaction comprises a temperature above 80°C.

38. (Original): The method of claim 32, further comprising cooling the reaction down to at least room temperature and filtering off the acid.

Claims 39-58. (Canceled)